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AUSSAT : The Social Shaping of a Satellite System.

**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Award
of the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

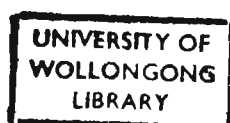
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S. R. PALTRIDGE, B.A.(Hons), M.A.(Hons).

**Department of
Science and Technology Studies,
1989**



CONTENTS

Title Page..	.. .. .	..i
Contents..	.. .. .	.. ii
Tables and Figures..	.. .. .	.. vi
Declaration..	.. .. .	.. vii
Author's Publications Relating to this Topic..	.. .. .	.. viii
Acknowledgements..	.. .. .	.. ix
Abstract..	.. .. .	.. x

Introduction

1.Introduction..	.. .. .	p.1
2.Theoretical Background..	.. .. .	p.1
3.Brief History of Aussat..	.. .. .	p.7
4.Brief Aussat Chronology..	.. .. .	p.9
5.Thesis Structure..	.. .. .	p.12
6.Methodology..	.. .. .	p.15

Chapter 1 The Satellite Context

1. The Development of Satellites..	.. .. .	p.22
2. Origins..	.. .. .	p.23
3. Nazis, V-2s and von Braun..	.. .. .	p.26
4. Operation Paperclip and the Wizards War..	.. .. .	p.27
5. RAND Report to <i>Sputnik</i> (1946-1957)..	.. .. .	p.32
6. 1960's Civilian Use: Intelsat and Comsat..	.. .. .	p.37
7. Open Skies to SBS..	.. .. .	p.42
8. The State of the US and World Satellite Industry..	.. .. .	p.45
9. The Transponder Glut..	.. .. .	p.46
10. Launch Failures..	.. .. .	p.47
11. Insurance Costs..	.. .. .	p.51
12. Fibre Optic Threat..	.. .. .	p.55
13. Intelsat's Future..	.. .. .	p.61
14. New Military Directions and the Civilian Industry..	.. .. .	p.65
15. Chapter Conclusion..	.. .. .	p.73

Chapter 2 - The Social Shaping of the Technology (1977-1984)

1. PBL, IBM and Aussat..	p.76
2. The Design Background: Spectrum and Transponder Politics..	p.82
3. The Satellite Project Office and Telecom..	p.92
4. The Western Union Offer..	p.114
5. The Satellite Project Office & PBL..	p.118
6. Packer Discontent and the Carver Committee..	p.126
7. Department of Finance Discontent..	p.130
8. Packer Discontent Continued..	p.140
9. Packer's Displeasure, B Mac & the ABC..	p.148
10. Chapter Conclusion..	p.155

Chapter 3 - Financial Modelling (1978-1983)

1. Aussat and Modelling..	p.156
2. The White Inquiry and Origins of Cost/Viability Debate ..	p.157
3. Aussat/DOC & Financial Modelling..	p.165
4. Computer Models & Public Policy..	p.171
5. Aussat & Hill Samuel..	p.176
6. Aussat, DOC & The Hawke Government..	p.186
7. Computer Models & the Department of Finance..	p.199
8. Chapter Conclusion..	p.208

Chapter 4 - ATEA & the Satellite Campaigns (1978 & 1983)

1. The ATEA Campaign Against the Satellite..	p.209
2. The First ATEA Campaign (1978)..	p.211
3. The Parliamentary Campaign and the Labor Party..	p.213
4. A Labor Government and Aussat :The Second Campaign(1983)..	p.217
5. The ATEA Assessment..	p.218
6. Aussat & DOC Respond..	p.220
6. The Question of Ownership..	p.230
7. The Trial..	p.234
8. Chapter Conclusion..	p.235

Chapter 5 - Aussat's Impact Constituency

(Part 1) - The ABC & the Satellite

1. Planning the First Generation.. .. .	p.237
2. Counting the Cost.. .. .	p.251
3. Chapter Conclusion (Part 1).. .. .	p.256

(Part 2) Aussat & Industry

1. Aussat and Technological Dependency	p.258
2. The Madigan Report.. .. .	p.259
3. Aussat First Generation: Projected Industry Involvement	p.260
4. Aussat First Generation: Actual Industry Involvement.. .. .	p.261
4. Aussat & Offsets.. .. .	p.264
5. Offsets and Overseas Experience.. .. .	p.268
6. Offsets & Second Generation	p.269
7. The State of the World Satellite Industry and Aussat's Second Generation	p.271
8. Cape York Spaceport.. .. .	p.275
9. Aussat and Cape York	p.280
10. Chapter Conclusion (Part 2).. .. .	p.284

(Part 3) - Aussat & Distance Education

1. The ICPA, Distance Education and Aussat	p.286
2. Chapter Conclusion (Part 3).. .. .	p.299

Chapter 6 - The Planning for the Second Generation (1984-1988)

1. Initiation of the Second Generation Planning Process	p.301
2. Second Generation Planning Structures and Operations.. .. .	p.311
3. Aussat & South Pacific.. .. .	p.315
4. OTC and Second Generation Planning	p.319
5. The Second Generation Design.. .. .	p.323
6. Aussat, DBS & Pay-TV.. .. .	p.340
7. Broadcasting and Media Ownership: Implications for the Future of Aussat	p.348
8. Chapter Conclusion.. .. .	p.365

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

[illegible]

Bibliography.. p.409

Glossary

(1)A Guide to Key Individuals In the Aussat Policy Process.	..	..	.	p.446
(2)A Guide to Key Organisations in the Aussat Policy Process	..	..	.	p.451
(3)Glossary of Terms .. .. .	..	..	.	p.455

Tables and Figures

ELV Launch Reliability.. .. .	p.51
NASA and DOD Expenditures (1960-1993).. .. .	p.67
Structure of SPO	p.99
National Satellite Project Organisational Arrangements.. .. .	p.101
National Satellite Project Organisational Arrangements.. .. .	p.102
National Satellite System - Planning and Development Group Organisational Chart ..	p.103
Telecom Cross Subsidy	p.109
Transmit Spot Beams.. .. .	p.123
Hill Samuel (1982 Projections) - Aussat (Actual).. .. .	p.181
Cancellation Costs	p.207
Aussat All-Up Costs	p.228
ABC Direct Satellite Costs	p.242
ABC Offsets.. .. .	p.243
ABC Total Operational Costs.. .. .	p.244
ABC Transmission Costs.. .. .	p.245
ABC Actual Aussat Costs and Offsets.. .. .	p.252
Earth Stations.. .. .	p.263
Aussat/ Intelsat Cost Comparison	p.323
Broadcasting Use of Aussat	p.325
Australian Television Advertising Expenditure 1982-1986 & Predictions for 1987-1988	p.358
Profit Report of Combined Australian Commercial Television Industry.. .. .	p.359
Proposed Aussat Pay-TV Beams	p.364
1984 Projected Revenue - Actual Revenue to 1988	p.372
Potential Revenue/ Costs to 1993.. .. .	p.374
Aussat Revenue 1985-1988	p.376
Capital City Commercial Television Technical Costs	p.377
1st & 2nd Generation Capital Costs	p.383
Mobile Satellite/Cellular Mobile Charges	p.387

DECLARATION

This work has not been submitted for a degree to any other university or institution.

S.R PALTRIDGE.

Author's Publications Relating to this Topic

"Crucial Issues in Spaceport Plan Ignored", The Australian, Monday May 23 1988.

"Pie in the Sky: The Heterogeneous Engineering of Aussat", Presented to the AAHPSS Annual Conference, Melbourne University, May 27 1988.

"Aussat & Distance Education", Paper presented at the STS Postgraduate Conference, University of Wollongong, July 1988.

"Satellite Technology and Distance Education in Australia", Submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training inquiry into 'New Technology in Education', July 1988.

'Satellite Broadcasting in Australia', Address at the Postgraduate Open Day, University of Wollongong, November 1988.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the planning process for the first and second generations of Australia's domestic satellite system (Aussat). It focuses on the development of a large sociotechnical system over more than a ten year period and the constellation of interest that became embroiled in one of Australia's most controversial projects. The present work seeks to call forth and highlight those factors most relevant to the shaping of particular aspects of technological development to produce an understanding of how participants in the negotiation of the sociotechnical design sought to assert their interests. In addition, the thesis examines Aussat's effect on its 'impact constituency' and how Australia's experience with the first generation of satellites, in turn shaped an on-going sociotechnical system. It closely details how organizations evolved and developed strategies to maintain the project's momentum.